(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the number of beneficiaries, State-wise, especially in Andhra Pradesh; and

(d) the amount allocated and released so far especially in Andhra Pradesh?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI PAWAN KUMAR BANSAL): (a) and (b) The Farm Credit Package announced by Government on 18.06.2004 for doubling the flow of agricultural credit, *inter-alia,* includes debt relief to farmers by way of reschedulement of loans with a moratorium period and "One Time Settlement Scheme" for small and marginal farmers. The farmers availing the benefit of the debt relief became eligible for fresh loans from the banks.

Further, in 31 debt stressed districts in the four states of Maharashtra (06), Andhra Pradesh (16), Karnataka (06) and Kerala (03), the relief package was announced for farmers by the Government. It provides for waiver of the entire interest on overdue loans as on 01.07.2006 such that all farmers will have no past interest burden as on that date. It also provides for reschedulement of the overdue loans of the farmers as on 01.07.2006 over a period of 3-5 years with a one year moratorium.

(c) and (d) The Government has released Rs. 1359.13 crore as its 50% share towards interest waiver for 31 districts of which Rs. 718.22 crore is for Andhra Pradesh towards share for waiver of interest on overdue loans for debt stressed farmers. The number of beneficiaries of the scheme is not available. However, against the target to waive Rs. 1436.44 crore of overdue interest in Andhra Pradesh, Rs. 1962.98 crore of overdue interest has been waived off.

New Income Tax Return Forms

4373. SHRI V. HANUMANTHA RAO: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Central Board of Direct Taxes (CBDT) has announced new Income Tax Return Forms for the year 2007-08;

(b) whether it is also a fact that the form 2F being used now will be removed;

(c) in what way will CBDT design a return form which will be simple to fill and people friendly;

(d) what are the reasons for the CBDT creating difficulties for the lowest rung Income Tax assessees; and

(e) the steps proposed to simplify all forms and refund procedures?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI S.S. PALANIMANICKAM): (a) to (e) Yes, Sir. For the assessment year 2007-08, Government have prepared eight return forms under a new series (ITR-1 to ITR-8), proposed to be notified on 14.5.2007. The return forms have been designed keeping in view the source of income of different categories of tax-payers and the suggestions received from different quarters. The return forms are intended to be simpler than the return forms notified in the past. All forms (except Form No. 7) have been made amenable to electronic filing. The Form No. 2F now being used will be removed.

Further, the procedure relating to refunds has been simplified. A number of tax-payer friendly initiatives like Electronic Clearing Service (ECS) and 'Refund Banker Scheme' have been introduced.

The Government is committed to providing a simple and pro-compliance tax system. Therefore, wherever any feed back is received about undue burden or any kind of harassment, immediate steps are taken to redress tax-payers' grievances.

Micro Finance Development and Equity Fund of NABARD

4374. SHRIMATI BRINDA KARAT: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any Micro Finance Development and Equity Fund of NABARD;

(b) if so, what is the current amount in the fund; and

(c) the details of loans and grants given from this fund to NGOs, Micro Finance Organisation and Micro Finance Institutions etc.?